

VZCZCXYZ0007
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAK #2467/01 2771206
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 041206Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3916
INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA// PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/425ABS IZMIR TU//CC// PRIORITY
RHMFISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU PRIORITY
RUEPGAB/MNF-I C2X BAGHDAD IZ OCT ANKARA TU PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002467

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR P AND EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY: U/S BURNS CONSULTATIONS WITH MFA

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Under Secretary Nicholas Burns consulted with senior Turkish MFA officials on a broad array of issues during bilateral meetings in Ankara September 19. They discussed Iraq, the PKK, Iran, U.S.-Turkey bilateral relations and the impact of a Congressional Armenian genocide resolution (AGR). END SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (C) U/S Burns met with Turkish MFA U/S Apakan for nearly five hours. Apakan was joined by MFA Deputy U/S Feridun Sinirlioglu (Middle East/South Asia), Haydar Berk (Americas/N.E. Mediterranean), Rafet Akgunay (Multilateral and Security), Unal Cevikoz (Central Asia/Caucasus/Eastern Europe/Africa, East Asia), GOT Iraq Coordinator Oguz Celikkol, DG for Americas Vefahan Ocak, DG for Security Hayati Guven, and others.

IRAQ/PKK

[1](#)3. (C) U/S Apakan emphasized Turkey,s desire for the U.S. to be successful in Iraq; if the U.S. fails, Turkey fails. The GOT fully supports a strong central government under Maliki and has told Arab countries to follow suit. Turkey continues to urge broad Sunni participation in politics and in reconciliation efforts. Apakan welcomed the postponement of the Kirkuk referendum. As a further show of commitment to Iraqi unity, Turkey will open a new consulate in Basra. The Turks talk to all groups, directly or indirectly, and believe that they can play a facilitative role. They welcome an increased UN role, seeing it as complementary to U.S. efforts. They view the upcoming Istanbul neighbors, ministerial as a &joint venture8 with the U.S. and want to work with us to make it a success. The GOT expects Iraqi Interior Minister Bolani to travel to Ankara the week of September 24 to negotiate bilateral agreements on counter terrorism and border security that it hopes to conclude prior to the conference.

[1](#)4. (C) Regarding refugees, Apakan said Jordan and Syria are shouldering a large burden. Turkey has given USD 3 million to UNHCR to assist with refugees and will provide additional

bilateral humanitarian aid to Jordan and Syria for this purpose. The refugees, largely middle class and professionals, represent Iraq's future. U/S Burns acknowledged Turkey's efforts, especially as so many other nations had held back. The U.S., too, needs to do better at taking in more refugees; this is a priority for Secretary Rice.

15. (C) Apakan stressed how difficult the PKK problem is for the Turkish public. It affects MFA efforts to encourage the Turkish military and others within the GOT to act with cool heads Iraq. Apakan focused on the need for tangible results.

He expressed appreciation for the U.S. investigation into weapons smuggled from Iraq into Turkey. The Ambassador stressed that U.S. officials had been very clear with President Talabani and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) leader Barzani on the need to crack down on the PKK. Turkish casualties are down substantially this year from last. There may be many causes of this, and we would not claim credit, but the change was noteworthy. U/S Burns reminded Apakan that part of the solution is Turkish dialogue with Iraq and with Iraqi Kurdish officials in the north. He encouraged Turkey to invite President Talabani Turkey.

16. (C) U/S Burns thanked Apakan for Turkey's engagement on Iraq and for hosting the neighbors ministerial. He reiterated the U.S. commitment to Iraq expressed by the President several days earlier. He called disappointing the behavior of Syria and Iran. Neither is helping Iraq, for example by limiting foreign fighters from transiting across its borders. Ambassador Crocker told the Iranians that we will judge them based on the continued flow of foreign fighters and Iranian-origin EFP technology into Iraq. We see no diminution of either. The U.S. military is now taking more casualties from EFP attacks than from Shi'a militants.

IRAN

17. (C) U/S Burns said that after Iraq, Iran and the Iran nuclear problem are our greatest global concerns. We want diplomacy to succeed, but currently see no progress. He described three ways to increase pressure to convince Tehran of the need to negotiate:

-- Passage of a third UNSC resolution, which the U.S. has drafted with the UK, but which Russia and China are currently blocking. El-Baradei's recent agreement with the Iranians has been very unhelpful, focusing on the past and failing to require that the Iranians halt enrichment which the UNSC demanded. IAEA board members have expressed dismay to El-Baradei. Apakan said that Turkey will approach El-Baradei too.

-- French FM Kouchner's approach that countries adopt individual economic sanctions against Iran. Within the EU, at least France and the UK are prepared to ratchet up bilateral sanctions on Iran. Perhaps Japan, South Korea, and Australia could be prevailed upon to do so as well. It is up to the world to tell Iran that business as usual cannot go on. Turkey should join this effort.

-- Banks and financial institutions shut down lending to Tehran. If financing stops flowing, perhaps Iran will start to negotiate seriously.

The three tracks must produce success. The military option remains on the table, but we are focused on diplomacy. DG Guven reported that Turkish banks, including Is Bankasi and Garanti Bankasi, took to heart the message on cutting off lending delivered by U.S. Department of Treasury U/S Levey during his December 2006 visit to Turkey.

18. (C) U/S Burns also reported that Iran has violated UNSCR 1747 by providing conventional arms to groups in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Apakan said that FM Babacan will see Iranian FM Mottaki on the margins of UNGA and will raise the issue. He had some hope that Iran has

started to understand that constantly playing the Hezbollah, Hamas, and similar cards will eventually have a boomerang effect and impact Iran's long-term stability.

¶9. (C) Apakan said that Turkey is cognizant of the threat a nuclear-armed Iran poses to the region and the world. Turkey supports the overall thrust of U.S. policy on Iran. In practice, though, sanctions on Iran pose great difficulties for Turkey in its overall trade relationship with nations to the east. Transit of Iran is key to trade with Central Asia.

One million Iranian tourists visit Turkey each year, and this exposure to freedom and prosperity must be helpful for promoting reforms we want to see in Iran. Only a small proportion of Turkey's natural gas originates in Iran, but supply shortfalls and a lack of good alternatives force a look at increasing supply from Iran. Apakan underscored that Iran is not a strategic partner and that Turkey's "foreign policy horizons" have no Iranian dimensions. Apakan also noted that Turkey has repeatedly followed up on USG requests to inspect Iranian aircraft suspected of ferrying weapons to Hezbollah and Hamas via Syria. The GOT had also reported to the UN on Iranian weapons apparently bound for Syria that were found on a derailed train in southeastern Turkey earlier this year.

ARMENIA GENOCIDE RESOLUTION

¶10. (C) Apakan expressed appreciation for Administration efforts to counter a Congressional Armenian genocide resolution (AGR). He said the GOT would like to take this

issue off the bilateral agenda altogether. At a recent in-house meeting GOT diplomats considered which issue poses the greatest danger to Turkey) Iraq or AGR/Armenia. To a person, they concluded it was Armenia (an AGR). U/S Burns reiterated the Administration's opposition to the AGR and described high-level efforts on the issue. He urged Turkey to consider a serious gesture toward Armenia, such as establishing diplomatic relations or opening the border. If Turkey takes a step, we will encourage Yerevan to reciprocate. Such a step would be helpful in Congress, without which it will be difficult to counter momentum in favor of a resolution. If the resolution does pass, our governments must work together to protect the U.S.-Turkish relationship, which is too important to fall victim to a non-binding resolution stating the sense of one chamber of Congress.

¶11. (C) Deputy U/S Akgunay responded that if the AGR passes, it will be impossible to explain to Turkish public opinion. It will be a bomb in our relations. The GOT will have no option but to react. It could affect joint U.S.-TU efforts in other parts of the world as well. Deputy U/S Cevikoz said that Turkey is at a critical juncture with Armenia. A new government has taken office that is sufficiently strong and confident to make new openings, which the GOT now plans to undertake. Director General for Security Guven pointed out that the Turkish public would fail to distinguish between the Administration and Congress.

MIDDLE EAST

¶12. (C) Apakan expressed interest in the Middle East peace conference planned for November. Turkey would like to contribute and participate as a concerned party. Turkey's role would be that of a facilitator and not a mediator. The Middle East peace process is a major component of Turkish foreign policy. Apakan added Turkey and the U.S. share similar foreign policy goals in the region. Burns thanked Apakan for Turkey's earlier offer to host the meeting and explained the importance of a U.S. venue to demonstrate American commitment. Burns encouraged Deputy U/S Sinirlioglu to discuss this when he sees NEA A/S Welch in Washington in October.

¶13. (C) Apakan asked whether Syria will be invited to join

the conference in November as well. Following Syrian FM Mouallem's recent visit to Turkey, Apakan saw potential for Israel and Syria to come closer together. U/S Burns explained that the peace conference will focus on the Israeli-Palestinian issue in order to capitalize on ongoing momentum. We have made no decisions on participation. Syria would need to demonstrate a greater level of responsibility to earn a seat at the table.

¶14. (C) U/S Burns emphasized the dire need for international assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA). The USD 200 million in customs duties released by the Israeli Government to the PA would run out in three months. It would be helpful for Turkey to encourage other Middle East countries, especially the Gulf States, to make a donation. U/S Apakan agreed to convey the message and offered to act as a facilitator with Palestinian leaders. Apakan added that the GOT, in partnership with the Turkish, Israeli, and Palestinian chambers of commerce, is working to develop industrial zones in Gaza and the West Bank for the purpose of increasing economic sustainability.

AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

¶15. (C) Apakan stated that Turkish policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan complements U.S. interests. Turkey does not want to lose Pakistan and supports Bhutto and Musharraf's objective of democratization to prevent the Talibanization of Pakistan. On Afghanistan, Apakan emphasized the need for reconciliation, including with Dostum, who can still contribute to stability. Apakan added that Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan will hold a trilateral at UNGA to discuss, among other topics, an economic development project along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Noting the imminent departure of Dutch and Canadian forces from ISAF, Burns emphasized the need for Turkey, the U.S. and the UK to continue our military responsibilities and for other NATO allies to do more to prevent the Taliban from winning.

CYPRUS

¶16. (C) Apakan complained about hard-line and unhelpful Cypriot Government positions and statements. Despite this, Turkey and Turkish Cypriots still aim for a comprehensive settlement under UN auspices, and the Annan Plan should be the starting point. In the long term, the two sides need to find a way to cooperate, share power and create a partnership arrangement. Apakan elaborated on the Talat-Papadopoulos September 5 meeting and presented a copy of the Turkish Cypriot proposal that UN Special Rep Moller had allegedly agreed is compatible with the July 8 Gambari process. Apakan also urged an end to Turkish Cypriot isolation.

¶17. (C) Burns responded that our diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cyprus will remain strong and that our goal is a reunited island. Our ambassador in Nicosia sees Talat as a reasonable, credible interlocutor who, if he had substantial leeway to negotiate, could make progress. Burns also noted tentative plans to visit Cyprus and said he will seek Apakan's advice before going. Among others, he will meet with Talat. Burns agreed on the importance of the Annan Plan, but said that a final settlement will require new ideas and a new approach.

KOSOVO

¶18. (C) U/S Burns outlined the USG position on Kosovo. He argued that the Kosovar Albanians have waited eight years for their status to be determined and cannot wait longer. The EU is not of one mind on this, but we expect key members, including France, the UK, Germany and Italy to recognize at the right time. This should pull many other EU members along. In response to a question, U/S Burns said that partition of Mitrovica is not an option. Russian suggestions along that line are a cynical game, and adjusting borders in

the Balkans could be dangerous. KFOR must be prepared to stay and defend the peace. When recognition happens, we will have to reach out to Serbia and urge it toward the EU and NATO. Burns suggested it would be useful if Ambassador Wisner, the USG special envoy on Kosovo, could come to Ankara for consultations. Apakan responded that Turkey's Kosovo policy remains in line with ours. Ankara supports Ahtisaari's recommendations. Kosovar independence should not be used against peace in the Balkans nor as an anti-Serb move.

NATO/ESDP

19. (C) Advocating a NATO strategy for the 21st century, U/S Apakan stated that the U.S. and Turkey share a common view on the future of the organization. He bemoaned Turkey's problems with the EU over ESDP. NATO solidarity cannot be reached when EU solidarity comes first. Apakan added that, as one of the top troop contributing countries to EU peacekeeping missions, Turkey deserves to be able to participate in ESDP decision making and planning. Burns assured Apakan that the U.S. will never ask Turkey to do anything against its national interest in this regard. He added that the U.S. continues to try to find a way forward on the Cyprus issue in order to improve Turkey's relationship with the EU.

20. (C) On NATO expansion, U/S Burns noted the U.S. commitment on Croatian membership and said we have not made up our minds on Albania and Macedonia. There is no country more enthusiastic than Albania, but corruption remains high and the judiciary needs reform. In Macedonia, all forward movement has ceased. Perhaps a preliminary decision can help motivate them. The Turks, Apakan said, support membership for all three, which they believe will help bring stability to the Balkans. Deputy U/S Akgunay said Turkey supports a Georgian Membership Action Plan, but has reservations about moving to NATO membership in the current context.

21. (U) U/S Burns has cleared this cable.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON